

COLORADO CANYONS NATIONAL CONSERVATION AREA
Advisory Council Meeting Minutes
March 14, 2002

Attendees:

Ken Currey	Greg Gnesios	Russ Walker	Dan Rosenthal
Art Donoho	Warren Gore	Ann Martinez	Troy Schnurr
John Foster	Doug Hall	Catherine Robertson	Bob Silbernagel
Doralyn Genova	Joe Keys	Jane Ross	

Greetings and Introductions

The meeting was called to order by Warren Gore at 3:00 p.m.

Minutes from the February meeting were approved.

Working Group Updates

Jane Ross, Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area (CCNCA) Planning and Environmental Coordinator, provided an overview of the Working Groups and their recently held meetings. Three of the working groups had arranged regularly scheduled meetings:

Wilderness Zone: 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month at 6:00 p.m.;

Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Conference Room

River Zone: 2nd and 4th Tuesdays at 5:00 p.m.; BLM Conference Room

Mack Ridge Zone: 1st and 3rd Thursdays at 5:00 p.m.; BLM Conference Room

Rabbit Valley Zone Working Group is scheduled to meet March 18, 6:30-8:30 p.m.; Fruita City Council Chambers

An Advisory Council member from each Working Group briefed attendees on the status of his group and provided a summary of the meeting.

River Zone Working Group:

Russ Walker provided this group's summary:

- Working on listing and prioritizing issues and concerns.
- Next step is developing management alternatives.
- Language in the CCNCA legislation leaves some uncertainty in planning responsibility for the river corridor. Clarification of the legislative intent would be helpful to the Working Group.

Warren has been in contact with Representative McInnis to arrange for this clarification. Representative McInnis will either attend the April 11, 2002, Advisory Council meeting, or prepare a video and provide a member of his staff at that meeting to discuss and answer questions, with emphasis on Wilderness and River issues.

ACTION ITEM: Warren, Greg, and Jane will prepare issue topics and/or questions for Melissa Simpson of Representative McInnis's staff.

Mack Ridge Working Group:

Dan Rosenthal provided the summary:

- Motorized use in the area was discussed; one runner wished to have all motorized use banned.
- Recreation trends and management of future use were discussed.
- Land health is an issue and must be recognized in recreation management, as well as grazing management.
- Limiting equestrian use on some mountain bike trails was mentioned.
- Exploring the possibilities for expanding camping.
- Discussion of building a short, new trail to link a segment of Kokopelli's Trail to an existing road.

Catherine Robertson, BLM Grand Junction Field Manager, requested that the Working Group discuss acquisition of private lands and the subsequent management of those lands, if added to the CCNCA.

Wilderness Working Group:

Joe Keys provided this group's summary. Troy Schnurr, BLM Ranger, gave the group a detailed explanation of current management of the Wilderness and discussed potential issues identified by the BLM. The group is developing a list of issues that will then be prioritized:

- Minimization of conflicts among users
- Maintaining access to the Wilderness
- Administrative access
- Water quality
- Wilderness interface issues
- Search and rescue
- Fire suppression
- Level of parking and staging areas to be provided

Bill Schapley was chosen as the Group Leader, and the Wilderness Working Group will meet the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays at 6:00 p.m. in the BLM Conference Room. E-mail communication was stressed as a valuable tool for members to use, for the purpose of expediting discussion outside of regular meetings.

The **Rabbit Valley Working Group** had not yet met, but the first meeting is scheduled for 6:30 p.m., March 18, 2002, at the Fruita City Council Chambers.

The next discussion concerned Working Group duration. The River Working Group put a 4-meeting limit on theirs; however, all groups may realize usefulness even beyond the planning stage. The main thrust is to identify issues, formulate alternatives, and prepare the draft Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) by December 2002. Zone-specific alternatives will come to the Advisory Council for discussion. From these zone-specific alternatives, management alternatives will then be developed, and eventually, a preferred alternative chosen. The EIS will analyze potential impacts of all alternatives.

Jane stressed that in order for the Working Groups' recommendations to reflect all parties interested in the management of the CCNCA, the groups must actively strive for balance and representation by a cross-section of users, and that leadership roles need not be the sole responsibility of the Advisory Council representatives.

BLM Update

Greg Gnesios, CCNCA Manager, gave an update on BLM issues. Two career seasonal CCNCA employees have arrived for the summer—Chris Pipkin and Sera Janson, both recreation technicians. In addition, a Washington Office employee, Steve Cohn, will spend three months in the Grand Junction field office (GJFO) assisting in the socioeconomic analysis for the CCNCA Resource Management Plan. Jim Cooper, a California BLM employee, will be detailed to Grand Junction to assist the GJFO in evaluating off-highway vehicle (OHV) travel management issues.

Ann Martinez, aide to Representative Scott McInnis, provided an update on the Advisory Council Resolution (dated February 14, 2002) requesting additional base funding for this fiscal year. The Resolution was received by Representative McInnis and is part of a large number of requests received.

Ken Currey, Northwest Resource Advisory Council (NWRAC) member, relayed that the NWRAC, which was holding its quarterly meeting at the same time as the CCNCA Advisory Council, had submitted a letter supporting the CCNCA Advisory Council Resolution.

The meeting was adjourned.